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CANNING MEAT AT HOME

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Broadcast by Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Wallace Kadderly, Radio Service, in the Department of Agriculture portion of the National Farm and Home Hour, Tuesday, January 12, 1943, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

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RUTH VAN DEMAN: And now I'd like to answer a question or two about canning meat at home.

WALLACE KADDERLY: Something different from the point-rationed commercially-canned food you've just been talking about?

VAN DEMAN: Yes, very different in several ways. The chances are home-canned meat will be figured as part of the meat ration.

KADDERLY: But that needn't hold anybody back from canning meat now from a farm-butchered animal, say.

VAN DEMAN: Certainly not.

KADDERLY: Many farm families make a regular practice of canning or storing meat in a freezer locker. That's the way they spread their meat supply through the year.

VAN DEMAN: And some are starting it this year for the first time...in spite of wartime difficulties with equipment.

KADDERLY: The shortage of tin cans, you mean?

VAN DEMAN: Yes, some people are bothered by that. But meat can be put up in glass jars just as well as tin cans. The canning experts caution though not to use jars larger than the quart size for home-canned meat. Pints are safer yet.

KADDERLY: Why's that?

VAN DEMAN: Heat doesn't penetrate glass as quickly as it does tin. It takes longer for the food in the center of a glass jar to heat to the point where the spoilage bacteria are killed off. Also, you can't plunge a glass jar of home-canned food into cold water to cool it quickly and keep it from overcooking, as you can food in tins.

KADDERLY: I see. But I take it you put all canned meat through a steam pressure processing, whether it's in glass or tin.

VAN DEMAN: Yes, that's the only reasonably quick sure way to make canned meat keep. And there's where the biggest problem is at present. There aren't enough pressure canners to meet the demands of wartime food conservation.

KADDERLY: Due of course to the shortage of aluminum and steel.....the same thing we're running into with farm machinery. But good neighbor sharing is helping some. I should think it might ease the situation with the steam pressure outfit.

VAN DEMAN: It is. In communities where everybody is an honest-to-goodness good neighbor....and takes extra good care of the equipment. The gauge on a steam pressure outfit is a rather delicate piece of apparatus. It needs careful handling to keep it registering accurately. If the gauge isn't accurate, the canned food doesn't get the proper heating.

KADDERLY: There's question on meat canning I'd like to ask, Ruth,a cold weather question. Suppose meat freezes. Is it all right to can that frozen meat?

VAN DEMAN: Yes, if it isn't thawed and allowed to stand first.

KADDERLY: You mean you cut the frozen meat up and pack it right into the jars, and put the jars into the canner, and whoop up the steam?

VAN DEMAN: Not so fast. Drop the pieces of frozen meat into boiling water first, and simmer until they're hot through. Then pack them hot into the jars and process. It's better to precook and pack all meat hot for home canning, before it goes into the canner for processing. By processing, of course, we mean the final intense heating that makes canned food keep sweet and sound.

But for all details on every step in meat canning, I refer you, Mr. Kadderly to one of the Department of Agriculture's best-known bulletins...."Home Canning of Fruits, Vegetables, and Meats." I'm sure I've mentioned it to our Farm and Home friends more times than we have fingers to count.

KADDERLY: Well, I'm sure that count is in the direction of good home-canned foods. And now, more than ever, in wartime, any person who's going to do home canning needs reliable timetables and good clear directions for handling meat or whatever the food. This is no time to take chances on food spoilage. So, Farm and Home friends, following up what Ruth Van Deman has just said, any of you who want a copy of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's home canning bulletin, just drop a post card to the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Write your address very plainly...say home canning bulletin.